

**California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Los Angeles Region**

**Executive Officer's Report
Dennis A. Dickerson, Executive Officer**

April 13, 1998

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- *** The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption
- *** For a list of simple ways to reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see the tips at: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/news/echallenge.html>

Cleanup & Abatement Order (CAO) for City of Thousand Oaks

The City of Thousand Oaks (the City) has complied with the time schedule included in their Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) No. 98-016, issued on February 9, 1998, by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, for the raw sewage spill into Arroyo Conejo. All three reports: the preliminary report on immediate actions taken; the final report on immediate actions taken; and the plan for long-term corrective action, were submitted in a timely manner by the City. Regional Board staff reviewed those reports and mailed out a letter in response. The Standards and Enforcement Unit is reviewing all information pertaining to the spill to determine whether the City of Thousand Oaks is subject to other enforcement actions, including penalties.

Formal Enforcement Actions

The Regional Board issued several enforcement orders during the month of March, including administrative civil liabilities (ACLs) and Cleanup and Abatement Orders (CAOs). The ACLs were issued to the County of Los Angeles (for a dry weather spill of raw sewage in October 1997), and to the County of Ventura/Ventura Regional Sanitation District (for violations of a permit limitation in waste discharge requirements for the Nyeland Acres Wastewater Treatment Plant). Cleanup and abatement orders were issued to the US Navy (for storm-related discharges of raw sewage at the Naval Air Weapons Station, Point Mugu), and to American Golf Corporation, Castle & Cook, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and Mountaingate Open Space Maintenance Association (for pollution from the Mission Canyon No. 6 Landfill, Los Angeles).

Regional Board Hosts Issues Forum

On April 1, 1998, the Regional Board held a follow-up meeting to the Cost Effectiveness workshops held in February in El Monte and Ventura. At those workshops, a number of recommendations were made regarding ways in which the Regional Board can improve its program efficiency and ways in which costs can be reduced for those regulated by the Regional Board. One of the recommendations was that the Regional Board assume a greater leadership role in ensuring that a forum exists for the discussion of emerging issues related to water quality regulation and for sharing information on the legislative initiatives that may affect the Regional Board and those affected by our regulation.

The April 1st follow-up meeting was held at the Regional Board's office in Monterey Park and a number of participants engaged in a discussion of issues that are critical to the Board's ability to meet its demanding obligations and expectations. Copies of the minutes of the meeting will be available on our website or may be obtained by contacting Ms. Ronji Moffett at (213) 266-7510. You may request to be added to the mailing list for future meetings by contacting Mr. Bryan Schweikert at (213) 266-7520.

Regional Board to Hold Workshop on Monitoring Programs on April 30th

Another recommendation from the Cost Effectiveness workshops held in February in El Monte and Ventura was to establish a working group to review monitoring programs to determine what efficiencies might be derived from their revision. The first meeting of the working group will be held on Thursday, April 30th, at 1:30 p.m. in our Monterey Park office. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for this working group, please contact Ms. Theresa Rodgers at (213) 266-7544.

Regulation of Commercial and Multi-Family Septic Tanks

Regional Board staff are developing a draft General Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) for submittal to the Regional Board at the May Board meeting. The general WDR will allow commercial and multi-family septic tank owners to apply under a general permit that will avoid the need to develop an individual permit for each unit. Monitoring plans developed pursuant to the general permit, however, will reflect the needs of certain areas that are believed to be more heavily impacted by septic tanks or which may require additional information to determine if impacts are occurring.

Septic tanks are a particular concern in the City of Malibu and other areas in the unincorporated portions of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. Regional Board staff met on March 23rd with representatives of the City of Malibu to brief them on the development of the draft general permit.

Chloride Policy

The Office of Administrative Law has approved the Regional Board's Chloride Policy (Resolution No. 97-02: Amendment to the California Regional Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan), to incorporate a Policy for Addressing Levels of Chloride in Discharges of Wastewaters. Accordingly, the Board will be considering revised chloride limits in permits for several publicly-owned treatment works at the Board meeting on April 13, 1998.

During the approval process for the Chloride Study, staff have been working with concerned parties on a Chloride Study to reevaluate water quality objectives in the Santa Clara River and Calleguas Creek watersheds. To date, the chloride study group has researched chloride standards needed for the protection of irrigation waters, and identified significant sources of chloride. The chloride study group is in the process of quantifying chloride loads from significant sources. Following this quantification, the chloride study group will evaluate cost-effective ways to manage chloride loading. Staff expect the chloride study group will complete this project by the end of 1999.

Drinking Water (MUN) Policy

Efforts to finalize a modified policy to protect sources of drinking water have been delayed while staff has been assessing water quality and preparing revisions to Region 4's 303(d) List. Staff expect to resume this project in April, and to have a draft policy ready for formal public review in May. Following a 45-day public review period, the policy would be presented to the Board for adoption.

Emergency Discharges From Refineries During Heavy Storm Events

Five refineries were informed by the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (CSDLAC) that they may be directed by CSDLAC to cease their discharge of industrial wastewater to the sewer which is tributary to the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in Carson in the event of heavy rains. This discharge restriction is to prevent rain-induced hydraulic overloading of JWPCP which could result in release of untreated sewage to local surface waters. The five refineries are Arco (Carson), Mobil (Torrance), Texaco (Wilmington), Tosco (Carson), and Ultramar (Wilmington).

Subsequently, Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA), on behalf of these refineries, informed the Board of these potential discharges of pretreated process water into Dominguez Channel if the restrictions are imposed by CSDLAC. The refineries have evaluated any other alternatives that may be open to them. One possible alternative is to impound the pretreated process water; however, the storage capacity is limited at most refineries (typically one or two days capacity). The refineries will notify the Regional Board within 30 minutes of receiving a directive from CSDLAC and, if forced to discharge to Dominguez Channel, will comply with the monitoring requirements of their respective NPDES permits. The names of the appropriate Regional Board staff contacts has been provided to WSPA.

WSPA has been informed that such notification and monitoring compliance does not preclude any enforcement action that may be imposed if such discharges are determined to be avoidable and/or preventable. As on March 25, 1998, no such emergency discharges from these refineries were reported to the Regional Board.

Joint No Further Action Letters Issued

On March 26, 1998, the U.S. EPA and the Regional Board issued joint "no further action" letters to 644 business owners clearing them from groundwater cleanup responsibility in the San Fernando Valley Superfund sites. A copy of a joint press release is attached.

Los Angeles Basin Contaminated Sediments Task Force

(SB 673) Karnette designates the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Coastal Commission as the lead agencies to develop a long-term management plan for the dredging and disposal of contaminated sediments from coastal waters adjacent to the County of Los Angeles. To implement our responsibilities under the bill, the Regional Board is co-chaired (with the Coastal Commission) a meeting of the Los Angeles Basin Contaminated Sediments Task Force on March 26, 1998. At this meeting, staff presented an overview of the Karnette legislation and its requirements, a proposed organizational structure for the task force and its working groups, and a strawman action plan containing the proposed goals, objectives and work products of the task force, as well as a tentative schedule for accomplishment of major milestones. A second meeting is planned for April to finalize the structure and goals of the task force so that the working groups may begin to meet to develop the work products that will be used to create the long-term management plan.

The Karnette bill requires the Coastal Commission (with participation by the Regional Board) to develop a management plan which identifies environmentally preferable, practicable disposal alternatives for contaminated sediments, promotes multi-use disposal facilities and beneficial reuse, and supports efforts for watershed management to control contaminants at their source. The management plan will be based upon the recommendations of the task force, which includes key regulatory agencies and other interested parties, namely the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Port of Los Angeles, Port of Long Beach, City of Long Beach, County of Los Angeles, and Heal the Bay.

The Karnette bill stipulates that the management plan must be developed on or before January 1,

2003. Annual public workshops will be held to review the status of the plan and to promote public participation in the process. The first workshop probably will be scheduled for late summer or early fall 1998.

Arcadia Wellfield

Regional Board staff have been working with Mobil Oil Corporation (Mobil), the City of Santa Monica (City) and USEPA on the MTBE problems at the City's Arcadia Wellfield. A substantial evaluation effort and some cleanup have been accomplished at the former Mobil station site. After Cleanup and Abatement Order 98-001 was issued to Mobil on January 7, 1998, Mobil and the City have been developing a cooperative agreement between themselves to oversee the remediation of the wellfield and the aquifer. Their work toward this agreement has caused some delays in shorter term deadlines, but we have stressed our concern for meeting the long term deadlines and goals of the Order.

City of Santa Monica and Mobil Business Settlement Agreement

The City of Santa Monica (City) and Mobil Business Resources Corporation (Mobil) entered into a Settlement Agreement on March 17, 1998. The signing of the agreement culminates several months of intense negotiations between the City of Santa Monica, Mobil and the Regional Board. The agreement settles an ongoing lawsuit between the parties for pollution of the Arcadia Wellfield. Under the agreement, Mobil will pay \$2.2 million dollars to cover past legal and assessment cost incurred by the City, continue to pay for ongoing oversight costs, and replacement water costs until full production is returned to the Arcadia Wellfield. The agreement will result in a reduction of 1.2 percent to water rates for Santa Monica residents. Board Member Nahai was present at the Council meeting when the City of Santa Monica approved the agreement. He made a short statement commending the efforts to correct the problem and indicated the Board's dedication to preventing or correcting additional problems of this kind.

A related Settlement Agreement has been developed between Mobil and the Regional Board. Under this side agreement, Mobil agrees to withdraw all petitions for review they filed with the State Board for issuance of Cleanup and Abatement Orders and assessment requirements related to the Arcadia Wellfield project. The Regional Board agrees to not pursue any penalties for deadlines that were not complied with in the past.

Los Angeles City Council's Endorsement of Sewer Project

Due to El Nino driven storms, sewer lines in parts of the City of Los Angeles were overwhelmed by the high wet weather flows causing raw sewage to overflow onto the streets. On March 25, 1998, the Los Angeles City Council adopted a motion directing the Department of Public Works to institute temporary measures to prevent sewage running in the streets and for the Bureau of Engineering to expedite the construction of the East Central Interceptor Sewer (ECIS) to eliminate the sewer line capacity problem in the South Central area of the City.

Charnock Wellfield

Field work by potentially responsible parties is continuing. Reports on the work are due in the Board Office the end of March. Board staff and USEPA staff met with representatives of the Shell and Chevron concerning additional evaluation of potential pipeline leakage. The extent of the additional work has not been completely defined, but is expected to be finalized by the end of March.

During March 1998, two sites; the Southern California Water Company and Southland Corporation were sent No Further Action letters based upon the results of investigation work completed at their sites leaving 28 Potential Responsible Party sites remaining within the Charnock Sub-basin

Investigation Area. These include 26 gasoline tank sites and two gasoline pipelines that traverse the Investigation Area. Of the 26 gasoline tank sites, 24 have approved soil/groundwater investigation workplans with 22 site assessments completed. Final reports containing the results of these investigations are currently being submitted for review and evaluation. Two sites with approved workplans have encountered access problems and site assessment work has been delayed, but is planned to start by the end of April 1998. The owner/operator of one recently identified gasoline tank site will be sent a work directive letter in early April 1998. Enforcement action for one property owner that has not submitted a workplan for subsurface investigation is in progress.

Based upon the results of subsurface assessment and pipeline testing completed along the Shell Pipeline a work directive and an information request was sent to Shell Pipeline Division.

Subsurface assessment and pipeline testing information for the Chevron Pipeline is currently under final review and evaluation. A determination will be made in early April to determine the scope of any additional subsurface assessment to be required.

South El Monte Operable Unit

On February 19, 1998, US EPA held a joint Whittier Narrows and South El Monte Operable Unit technical meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to share the results of recent contaminant transport modeling with interested parties and to jointly evaluate the findings. The modeling indicates that unless a hydraulic control barrier is provided at the Whittier Narrows Dam, volatile organic compounds (VOC) contamination above the maximum contaminant levels will impact the Montebello Forebay. The Montebello Forebay is the main recharge area for the drinking water aquifers of the Central and Coastal Basin of Los Angeles. US EPA renewed its pledge to protect the Central Basin from VOC contamination originating in San Gabriel Valley and is moving forward with a plan for an extraction and treatment plant at the Whittier Narrows Dam to prevent migration of contaminants into the Central Basin.

Golden Eagle Refinery Site

During 1992 to 1994, LASMO Oil and Gas Inc. (LASMO), owner of the former Golden Eagle Refinery site in the City of Carson bio-remediated approximately 1.3 million cubic yards of hydrocarbon contaminated soil. Staff issued a "no further action (NFA) letter" for soil remediation and approved the site for development. In July 1995, this Board issued an "Agreement For Reciprocal Covenants" (PPA) in which LASMO projected up to seven years of expenses for remediation. Subsequently, K-Mart purchased a 19 acre portion of the site and is currently operating a large retail store on the site during remaining groundwater remediation. LASMO is remediating groundwater contamination using air sparging/vapor extraction including removal of residual localized fuel trapped in soil formation beneath groundwater on the K-Mart portion of the site. In December 1996, LASMO requested a final NFA letter for all remediation at the site. The rationale for the NFA letter was developed using both field data showing significant reduction of benzene concentrations and a health risk assessment (HRA) showing no risk to human health and the environment from remaining hydrocarbon contamination in the subsurface. The HRA is being evaluated by DTSC and would represent a change in remedial objective for soil and groundwater cleanup at the site from those detailed in the approved remedial action plan and PPA. Staff plans to meet with all parties in this matter to discuss relevant issues pertaining to completion of the HRA and possible modification of the remedial action plan.

Public Outreach

1. Regional Board staff Yue Rong was a platform speaker at the 8th annual west coast conference on contaminated soils and groundwater sponsored by the Association for the Environmental Health of Soils on March 11, 1998, at Oxnard, California. The speech title was "MTBE soil remedial

concentration based on Monte Carlo simulation."

2. Regional Board staff Yue Rong participated in the meeting of upgraded underground storage tank advisory committee workgroup on the subject of MTBE release determination on March 13, 1998. The advisory committee workgroup consists of staff from State Board, Regional Board, county government, local water district, local fire department, major oil company, and private companies for underground tank upgrading system. The committee solicits input regarding the potential leak of MTBE from the upgraded underground tank systems.

3. Regional Board staff Rick Vergets made a presentation on March 25, 1998 to the San Gabriel Valley Economic Council. The presentation outlined the MTBE Procedure used by Board staff to evaluate risk at leaking sites and the potential for closure of those sites.

4. Regional Board staff made a presentation to the California Waste Association on March 25, 1998. The information requested by this group covered both the MTBE Procedure and the December 22, 1998 deadline for upgrading underground storage tanks.

5. A number of Regional Board staff made presentations at the UST Conference held in Long Beach from April 7 to 9, 1998. Presentations and panel discussions included the Regional Boards MTBE Review Procedures and MTBE Pollution of the Charnock Sub-basin.

6. The Executive Officer and Rod Nelson, Chief of the Groundwater Regulatory Unit, attended the March 18th meeting of the Southern California Waste Management Forum. The Executive Officer gave a speech to those present and Rod Nelson answered a number of technical questions raised by the audience.

Underground Storage Tanks Roundtable

On February 4, 1998, UST program managers for all nine Regional Boards and State Board staff met for the second in a renewed series of program manager roundtables. The Los Angeles Regional Board hosted this session. The roundtable discussion included workload allocations, closure criteria, Region to Region consistency, and responses to audit comments by the regions to the SWRCB.

Underground Storage Tank Working Group Meeting Set

The next meeting of the Regional Board's Underground Storage Tank Working Group has been scheduled for Monday, May 4, 1998, at 9:00 a.m. at the Regional Board office in Monterey Park. The focus of the meeting will be to discuss the upcoming December 22, 1998, upgrading deadline for underground storage tanks. If you have an interest in participating in this working group, please contact Mr. Y. Rong at (213) 266-7604.

Toland Road Landfill

Regional Board staff will attend a workshop held by the State Board on April 1. The purpose of the workshop was to hear new evidence submitted by Ventura County Citizens to Stop Toland Road Landfill to support their petition concerning the possible presence of Holocene faulting at the site. The new evidence suggests the possible presence of a large scale landslide in O'Leary Canyon which could conceal the presence of holocene faulting.

Freedom of Information Act and Public Records Act Requests for the Month of February 1998

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and Public Record Act (PRA) requests to review or copy public documents are a very important part of the work at the Regional Board. The FOIA and PRA cover most of the documents at the Regional Board. Recently, the State legislature adopted statutory language requiring that these requests be tracked by the Regional Boards. The FOIA and PRA require agencies to provide a response on the availability of the requested document within 10 working days (FOIA) or 10 calendar days (PRA) of receiving the request. The Regional Board has developed a procedure and a database to track these requests.

During the month of February, 1998, 15 FOIA / PRA requests were received and processed, and in all cases, a response was provided within the mandated time frame.

Watershed Management

Calleguas Creek Watershed

The Water Quality/Water Resources Subcommittee is in the process of drafting a Water Resources/Water Quality Chapter in the Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan. Subcommittee members have developed a list of their goals and objectives for water quality and water resources and are working to clarify participants' goals and objectives, identify possible solutions to problems, pinpoint concrete actions which will be taken to address the problems, filter out long-term from short-term goals, and reach agreement on what issues to deal with first. The subcommittee's next meeting was held April 3rd.

The Habitat & Recreation and Flood Management Subcommittees held a joint meeting on February 17. Discussion of funding sources was a major topic. The next meeting of the Habitat Subcommittee is scheduled for April 14.

The Public Education/Outreach Subcommittee met on February 11. The subcommittee is working on producing an educational brochure and a video covering Calleguas Creek Watershed issues and watershed management in general.

The full Management committee met on February 4. Agenda items included presentations on agricultural BMPs and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). Information about the management committee and its subcommittees can be found at "www.calleguas.com".

The Surface Water Element of the Calleguas Creek Characterization Study Monitoring Program has been approved by the Executive Officer; the Groundwater Element is close to being finalized. Monitoring is scheduled to begin in June 1998.

Los Angeles River Watershed

The Los Angeles/San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council met on February 18. Meetings are generally held at the Los Angeles County Public Works facility in Alhambra at 900 S. Fremont Avenue on the third Wednesday of each month. The Watershed Council has a number of committees including Finance and Representation, Three-Year Watershed Study (interaction with LA River Task Force), Stakeholder Programs, Public Education and Outreach, Projects, and Research.

Santa Monica Bay Watershed

The Modeling and Monitoring Subcommittee of the Malibu Creek Watershed Advisory Council met on February 5 to begin work on developing a watershed-wide monitoring program for the Malibu

Creek Watershed. The next meeting was scheduled for March 24.

Other Santa Monica Bay Watershed activities are covered under the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project item.

ENFORCEMENT

Summary of Enforcement Actions - February 1 - 28, 1998

Formal Enforcement Actions

Cleanup and Abatement Order.....1

Administrative Enforcement Actions

California Water Code violation.....2
Permit violations.....6
Noncompliance with Cease and Desist Order.....2
Noncompliance with Cleanup and Abatement Order..2

Administrative Enforcement Actions for Overdue / Incomplete Reports

Discharge monitoring reports.....6
Technical monitoring reports.....17
Site assessment plans.....11
Site assessment reports.....14
Site cleanup plans.....3

Administrative Enforcement Actions for Stormwater Permits

Failed to submit Storm Water Annual Report.....1
Failed to file a Notice of Intent for coverage under
General Storm Water Permit.....1

Total Enforcement Actions for February.....66

All Reported Spills

Chemical.....8
Crude oil.....26
Diesel.....13
Gasoline.....4
Miscellaneous petroleum products.....11
Oil.....6
Other.....1
Sewage.....68
Waste water.....2
Vapors.....6

Total.....145

Spills which Entered Waterways or Waters

Chemical.....	2
Crude oil.....	16
Diesel.....	8
Gasoline.....	2
Miscellaneous petroleum products.....	7
Oil.....	2
Other.....	0
Sewage.....	53
Waste water.....	2
Total.....	92